

Human papillomaviruses. Clinical and Scientific Advances.

Ed JC Sterling, SK Tying. Pp 153; £65.00. London: Arnold Publishers, 2001. ISBN 0-340-74215-1.

Most of us have had an encounter with warts at some time in our lives. We try to freeze, poison, or corrode them, occasionally resorting to surgery, laser vaporisation and, latterly, immunotherapy. Our modest success at treatment only underscores the general public's perception that warts are a common but incurable nuisance. All this trouble from a family of viruses with a host range that spans the animal kingdom and an astonishing spectrum of disease manifestations. The development and subsequent exploitation of increasingly sophisticated molecular techniques over the past 30 years have led to a rapid increase in the understanding of the biology of papillomaviruses, especially human papillomaviruses (HPVs). Much of this effort has focused on the propensity of certain HPV types to contribute to malignant transformation and, increasingly, on the potential for developing more effective therapies, including vaccines to prevent HPV associated cancers.

Jane Sterling and Stephen Tying have managed to assemble a panel of clinical and scientific experts working on HPV and have produced a highly readable and concise account of the recent advances in our understanding of this fascinating infection. The chapters are laid out logically in three main parts—Molecular and Cellular Aspects, Diseases and Infections, and Future Prospects: treatment and basic research. The book is beautifully illustrated throughout, providing greater clarity in explaining complex molecular mechanisms as well as good clinical examples of the different types of HPV related diseases. Some overlap in coverage is inevitable in a multiauthor textbook but this does not detract from the consistently high quality of the finished product.

This book is ideal for both junior and senior staff who need to acquire some knowledge of the mechanisms and spectrum of HPV disease. The scientific reviews should prove useful to those sitting for postgraduate examinations and other (mischievous) purposes. Those of you who may have grown rather neurodystrophic from the HIV arrivistes' staff room chants of Intention to Treat, BLQ (I was always under the impression they were talking about bacon, lettuce, and tomato sandwiches), CYP3A4 inhibition,

and K103N at every available opportunity will welcome this slim, lean textbook. A sharp riposte on the lines of, "that's all very well, but did you know that the HPV 16 and 18 E7, like E1A and SV40 large T bind to the family of cellular proteins which include pRb, p107, and p130 and that the latter two complex with regulators of the cell cycle including members of the E2F family, cyclin A, and cyclin E, and participate in the regulation of both G1 and G2 cell cycle blocks . . .?" [p 26] should be sufficient to keep their overblown egos in check, albeit temporarily.

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Understanding thrush, cystitis and women's genital symptoms.

By Caroline Bradbeer. Pp 96; £3.50. London: Family Doctor Publications in association with the BMA, 2001. ISBN 1-903474-00-0.

This book certainly compares favourably with some of the offerings available in our local pharmacies and health food shops. Overall, it gives a concise summary of female genital infective problems and physiology in clear and accessible language. This is supplemented by a series of clear illustrations, case discussions, and summary boxes. As well as the general public, medical students and nurses might find this a useful and informative book.

While there were no major reservations about the book the title did seem a little misleading. Although "thrush" is covered well and sensibly it is only a relatively minor part of this book. Maybe it should have been called "women's genital symptoms—including thrush, cystitis, and other infections." Also it is not really relevant to perimenopausal and postmenopausal women and this isn't made clear in the introduction. The only real shortcoming was that painful sex was given too little space and although vulvodynia is mentioned and indexed there is no mention of the vulval vestibulitis syndrome despite this being commonly misdiagnosed as "problem thrush."

A good little book for the pharmacy bookshelf and to recommend to patients.

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NOTICES

International Herpes Alliance and International Herpes Management Forum

The International Herpes Alliance has introduced a website (www.herpesalliance.org) from which can be downloaded patient information leaflets. Its sister organisation the International Herpes Management Forum (website: www.IHMF.org) has launched new guidelines on the management of herpesvirus infections in pregnancy at the 9th International Congress on Infectious Disease (ICID) in Buenos Aires.

Pan-American Health Organization, regional office of the World Health Organization

A catalogue of publications is available online (www.paho.org). The monthly journal of PAHO, the Pan American Journal of Public Health, is also available (subscriptions: pubsvc@tsp.sheridan.com).

18th Congress on Sexually Transmitted Infections IUSTI-Europe 2002

12–14 September 2002, Vienna, Hofburg Congress Center.

Chair of the Congress, Director of the European Branch of IUSTI: Angelika Stary, MD (Austria)

Further details: Angelika Stary, c/o Administrative and Scientific Secretariat, Vienna Academy of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research, Alser Strasse 4, A-1090 Vienna, Austria (tel: (+43 1) 405 13 83 13; fax: (+43 1) 407 82 74; email: iusti2002@medacad.org; website: www.iusti-europe-2002.org).

26th National Conference of the Indian Association for the Study of Sexually Transmitted Diseases & AIDS

18–20 October 2002, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, India

The last date for submission of abstracts for free papers is 1 September 2002. The registration fees for foreign delegates is \$50 (SAARC countries) and \$100 (other countries).

Further details: Indian Association for the Study of Sexually Transmitted Diseases & AIDS (fax: (0)91 011 686 2663; email: iasstd2002@sify.com).